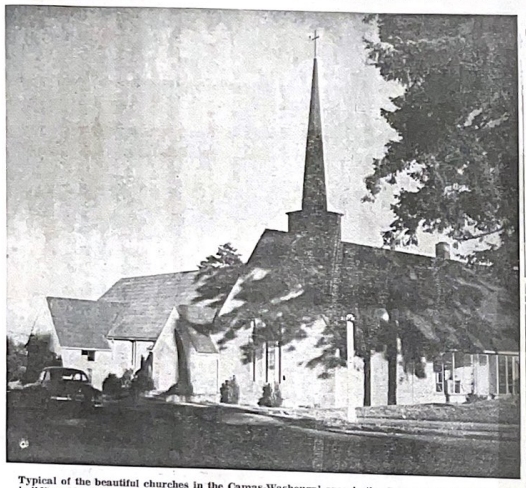
GROWTH OF COMMUNITY'S MANY OUTSTANDING CHURCHES DATES BACK TO 1883



Typical of the beautiful churches in the Camas-Washougal area is the Camas Methodist Church building, N. E. 14th and Franklin. This new church was completed in July 1950. The Methodist Church was established here back in 1884.

Two Families Organize Camas Methodist Church

Camas Methodist church was organized in 1884 by the Rev. Ferguson with five members—two families. The first resident minister was Rev. W. H. Drake who served from September 1887 to 1888.

First meeting for the purchase of land, a building site was in 1888. In December of 1888 twelve members voted to incorporate and make plans for a building. The new building was dedicated in August 1891—67 years ago. Additions and improvements were made during the years. In 1949 the church and parsonage site were sold and the parsonage building was moved to a new site on 14th and Franklin. A new church site was purchased on Northeast 14th and Franklin and the present church structure was begun in the fall of 1949 and opened for services on July 9, 1950, with the resident Methodist Bishop Gerald Kennedy as the guest speaker.

The Rev. Robert Shaw was the minister during the period of moving the parsonage to its present location and the construction of the church building. The church has now grown to a membership of more than 300.

It is interesting to note there are three members of long years of continuous membership: Mrs. Erma Stout became a member in 1908, and now lives at 630 N.E. 15th. Mrs. O. F. Johnson and Mrs. C. M. Koplin have been active members since 1908 and 1909 respectively.

"On February 2, the Camas mill produced 24 tons of paper with three machines climbing to new altitudes. No. 1 produced 17,235 pounds of 10-pound tissue; No. 5, 122,037 pounds of news and No. 6, 168,681 pounds of news. Limits have been abolished in the Camas mill and the end is not yet."—MAKING PAPER, Vol. 2, February 1920.

Feb. 29, 1908, LaCamas Post — James Self and John Ough Jr. went around the world Sunday reaching home at three o'clock in the afternoon. During the day they visited Troutdale, Gresham, Estacada, Portland, Oregon City and a number of other places of more or less note.

Nov. 9, 1941, Charter Day Of Church

St. Mathew's Lutheran church (Washougal) was chartered on Nov. 9, 1941.

Charter members were Mr. and Mrs. Fred Blomenkamp, Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Hirsekorn, Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Krause, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kuhnke, Mr. and Mrs. Roy Vahsholtz, Arnold Hirsekorn, Mr. and Mrs. Carl Genz, Mr. and Mrs. Reinhold Hirsekorn, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Krause, Mr. and Mrs. Guy Tennant and Mr. and Mrs. G. Wagner.

Carl Genz was first president, Fred Blomenkamp first secretary, Reinhold Hirsekorn secretary-treasurer, and Charles Kuhnke and A. L. Hirsekorn were first elders.

Today W. Rogelstad is chairman, L. Blodgett secretary, E. Otto elder, Walter Meyer elder, Walter Hein elder.

Others: Helmuth Schneider, Bernard Wolk and Clarence Hein, trustees; W. Hoffman, R. Vahsholtz and Harold Hein, finance committee; Mrs. G. Tennant and Mrs. L. Blodgett organists.

Current projects include "organizing our youth into a force that will be word and deed witness for the Gospel of Christ, leading men into the Kingdom of God and improving our physical properties to meet the needs of the times."

Contributions to the community include improvement and maintaining the moral and spiritual level of the community, to that end serving the community wherever possible both individually and as a congregation. St. Matthew's has for the past two years given its basement auditorium and its facilities to the school district for use as classrooms for the community's kindergarten.

The church holds worship services at 8:30 and 11 a. m. Sundays and Sunday school at 9:45 a. m.

Congregational meetings are the first Sunday of January, April, July, October and December. Sunday school teachers meet Tuesdays at 7:30 p. m., St. Matthew's Guild at the same time, and Walther League (youth group) first and third Sundays, 7:30 p. m.

St. John's 1st Church At LaCamas; Organized 1883

St. John's Presbyterian Church was organized in 1883 when the first religious worship service held in Lacamas was in the old warehouse at 3rd and Columbia Streets (now Division). The leaders of this program organized the local church with five charter members: Aennus MacMaster, Elizabeth MacMaster, (later Mrs. Allen Duffin) Martha Conkling, C. F. McCord, and F. Knutson. The first elder was Aennus MacMaster, and the first pastor was the Rev. J. A. Hanna.

First church building erected in 1881 was St. John's which was a frame building located on Division Street just below the Mill Ditch. It was used until the present building was erected and dedicated September, 1942. The present building is now being remodeled, enlarged and a new Christian Education building being built on the east side.

There have been 18 pastors, the longest pastorate until the present one was seven years. The present pastor, the Rev. John F. Phipps came to St. John's Church, April 1, 1936,—twenty-two years ago.

The officers are: Elders: George Ayers, Milt Bona, Mrs. Clifford Duncan, Fremont Everett, Mrs. B. E. Hall, Carl Hinman, Lloyd Hutchison, Dee Laird, Richard Lawton, and Warren MacGregor.

Deacons: Mrs. A. M. Fisher, Mrs. Carl Hinman, Mrs. Harry Jones, Mrs. Dale Olds, Mrs. Ethel Roffler, and Mrs. Fred Stoller.

Trustees: Max Brower, Mackenzie Goold, Harry Jones, Mrs. Elliott Irvine, Dr. W. M. Hearon, Dr. Edward McAninch, Arthur Newbauer, Norval Reeder and Mrs. Joe Stewart.

Mill Plain Church Beginning Dates Back to 1886

The East Mill Plain Methodist church is a union of two churches, Harmony church and Epworth church. Harmony church was organized May 23, 1886. Charter members were Mr. and Mrs. George A. Whipple, Mr. and Mrs. George Peebles, Mrs. Hiram Stamp, Mr. and Mrs. S. S. Cook, Father Crisp and wife. Epworth church was organized Sept. 1, 1891, with Mr. and Mrs. G. J. Allen, Mr. and Mrs. S. S. Cook, Mrs. Henry Hitchcock, A. H. Nichols, Mrs. C. A. Laver, Mr. and Mrs. Matt Blair, Mr. and Mrs. C. S. Blair as charter members. On March 17, 1921, the two churches were merged into the present organization.

In the early days the pastors served the La Camas (Camas) Methodist church, then rode horseback or drove out to these country appointments. Some of these circuit riders were Rev. W. H. Drake, Rev. T. W. Butler, and Rev. F. M. Pickles.

Twenty-two pastors have served this church since its beginning. Some of these were Rev. W. E. Rossman, who was the father of the well known Miss Lela Rae Rossman, formerly of Camas and Washougal, and now of Kalama; Rev. B. G. Clemans, who was the father of George and Charles Clemans, now living in Camas; Rev. C. H. Cowdy, who served from 1930 to 1936, and who in the early 1900's pastored the La Camas Methodist church just after he arrived from Ireland.

George A. Whipple was the first Sunday school superintendent at Harmony. We have no record of the Epworth Sunday school superintendent. The present Sunday school superintendent is Mrs. Dorene Grace.

Services are held each Sunday, Sunday school at 10 a. m., preaching service at 11 a. m. The pastor for the last ten years has been Rev. Harry Walling, who is well known in Camas.

The new pastor is Rev. Floyd Green of Denver, Colo.

The purpose of the church is to convert people to the Christian way of life. It contributes to the spiritual and social life of the community.

LaCamas Post, Feb. 1, 1908 — A. McDowell has sold a half interest in the Up-to-Snuph barber shop to Arthur Frey of Vancouver.

1944 Picnic Scene Of First Meet of Church Women

Seventy women were in attendance in Crown Park at a picnic meeting in August 1944 when the Camas-Washougal United Council of Church Women came into being.

First president was Mrs. B. E. Hall; vice president, G. Williams, secretary - treasurer; Mrs. Peter Wilkie, and progress chairman, Mrs. Edward Tidland.

Purpose of the organization was "to strengthen church women's groups in every part of our state and nation. To unify our efforts and make it possible for every church woman to lift up the ideals of Christ in her home, in her community, in the nation and in the world."

Present officers: president, Mrs. E. A. Price; vice president, Mrs. Cass Roberts; secretary-treasurer, Mrs. E. R. Kaemmer. The group meets the fourth Tuesday of each month at the various churches of members.

The organization now is referred to as United Church Women and is affiliated with the State and National Council of Churches.

Projects include World Community day, first Friday in November; World Day of Prayer, first Friday in Lent, offerings for interdenominational mission projects; May Fellowship Luncheon, first Friday in May, offering for Christian education.

The group sponsors Hallowe'en "trick or treat" for all the world's children, for medicine, milk, etc. Members collect postage stamps and the money from sale of them buys milk for hungry children of the world.